

COUNTRY Iran/Iraq

SUBJECT Mehdi Hashim Najafi, Communist  
Labor Agitator

PLACE 25X1A6a

ACQUIRED

DATE OF INFO

25X1X6

25X1X6

DATE DISTR. 18 August 1948

NO. OF PAGES 1

NO. OF ENCLS.  
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO  
REPORT NO.

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1. Mehdi Hashim Najafi is one of the most important and dangerous Communist labor agitators in Iran, according to informant. He has been well trained by the Communists, is intelligent and commands a great deal of respect in Iranian labor circles. He is a professional Communist labor agitator.
2. Najafi, who is an Iranian citizen, was born in Najaf, Iraq, although his family came from Tabriz. His first position was that of schoolteacher. Later he was employed by Iranian State Railways as assistant station-master at Sharifiyah. He was discharged from this position when it was discovered that he had become a Communist.
3. Najafi; his brother, Hadi Najafi, who was then a clerk in the Iranian Consulate at Basra; and other unspecified persons were arrested in Iraq after the seizure of secret cipher correspondence. In 1935 Najafi was sentenced to two years in prison. This was later commuted to one month's internment.
4. When Kamil Chaderohi became Minister of Economics and Communications in October 1936, Najafi secured a pardon and was appointed works foreman in the Public Works Department in Baqubah, Iraq.
5. The Iraqi police, however, maintained a close watch on Najafi and eventually succeeded in securing an order for his deportation; he was deported to Iran on 28 October 1937. Najafi there complained to the Iraqi Legation in Tehran and attempts were made to have him returned to Iraq. He again tried to return to Iraq in 1942 but was still unsuccessful.
6. Najafi became editor of the Tudeh Party newspaper, Mardom, and wrote sharp editorials against the labor policy of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

Document No. 802  
NO CHANGE IN CLASS.  
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Class. CHANGED TO: TS S C  
DDA Memo 4 Apr 77  
Auth: DDA REG-77/1763  
Date: 8/3/97 By: OOF

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